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GOD'S SPECIAL BLESSING ON THE AVONDALE SCHOOL FARM

The words of the angels, "God can provide a table in the wilderness," were fulfilled in a most remarkable way. Two or three years after the purchase of the estate, there was a terrible famine which extended over the greater portion of Australia. Cattle, horses and sheep died by the thousands. At the time a horse could be purchased for a shilling and a sheep for six pence. Well do I remember how my sister and I pleaded that Father buy us each a pony. But the markets were too far from our home to permit us making such an investment. Commenting on the awful drought, a Sydney newspaper stated that the one exception to the sad condition of the country was the Avondale School Estate, which was like an oasis in the desert. The school garden produced an abundant supply of green vegetables and melons. One stalk of corn brought into our house reached nearly to the ceiling of the sitting room. There must have been hidden springs under this portion of the school farm, that were known only to God. (As I remember, this was a comment made by one of the school faculty members.) A special blessing seemed to rest upon the school from its very opening. Not a case of sickness developed among the students that first year. There was no boys' dormitory. As soon as the Sabbath meetings could be moved into one of the newly erected buildings, the saw-mill loft, previously used as meeting house and school room--for night school conducted for those who were clearing land and sawing the gigantic eucalyptus trees into lumber for buildings, preparing land for garden, etc.--was fitted out with cots; curtains were strung between the beds, and this was the home of the young men students that first school year at Avondale.

--Ella M. Robinson  
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